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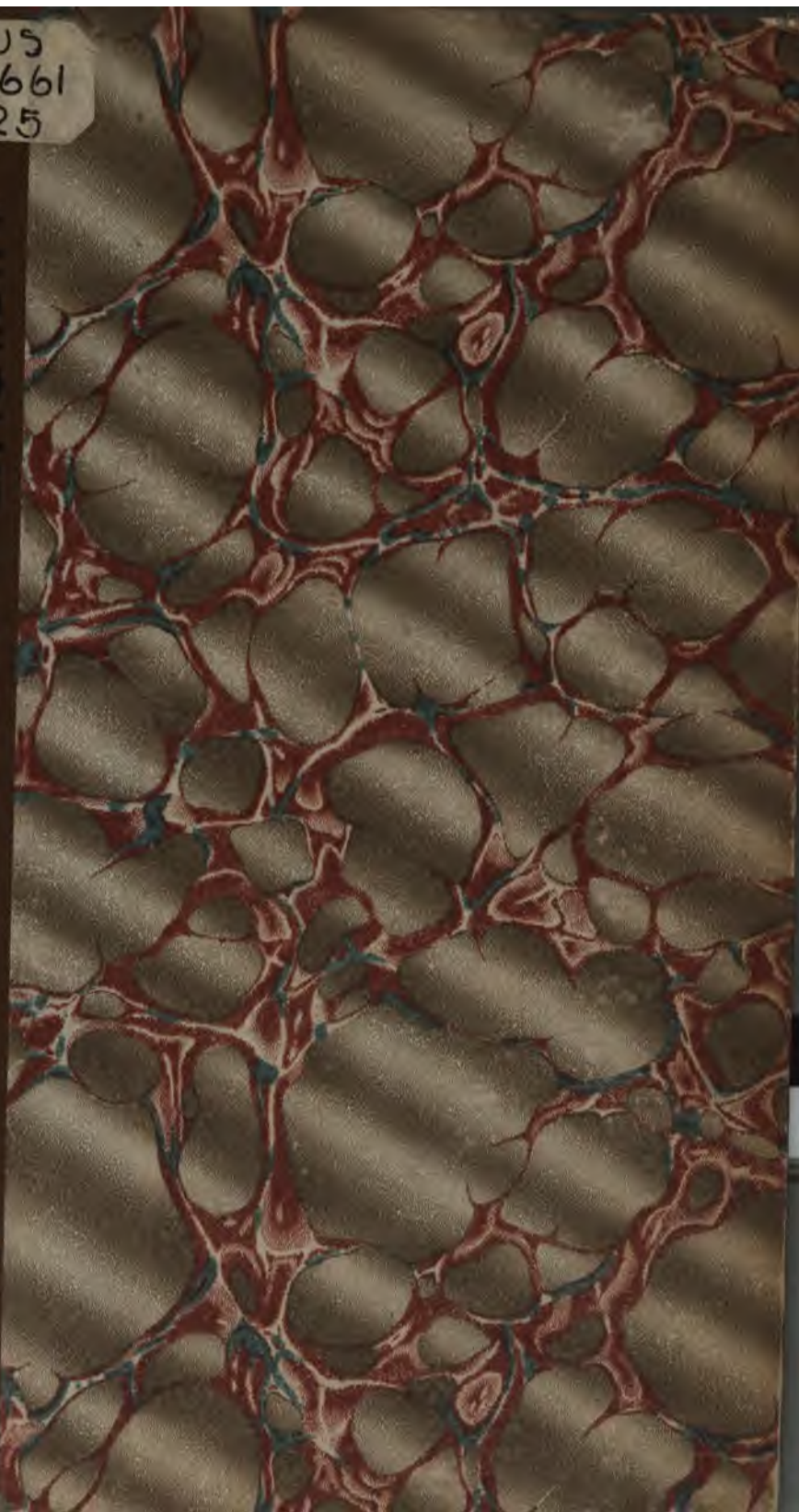
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Frothingham, - Christian Patriotism.



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FROM

Joseph S. Swain



CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM :

A SERMON,

ON OCCASION OF

THE

Death of John Adams,

PREACHED

IN CHAUNCY-PLACE, BOSTON,

JULY 9TH, 1826.

BY

N. L. FROTHINGHAM,

MINISTER OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN BOSTON.

BOSTON :

PRINTED BY MUNROE AND FRANCIS.

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1826.

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Gift of
Joseph S. Swann



This sermon, prepared in extreme haste, is reluctantly yielded for publication to the request of many of its hearers, and respectfully dedicated to them by their friend and servant, the preacher.



CHRISTIAN PATRIOTISM.

GENESIS XLIX. 29.

—BURY ME WITH MY FATHERS.

THE old patriarch Jacob, who had spent many of the best days of his life in exile, and was now finishing the poor remnant of it in a foreign country, turned his last thoughts towards the place of his birth. Circumstances had long ago made him a pilgrim to other lands, and a stranger in his own. He was now dying, of extreme age in one of the

pleasantest provinces of Egypt, but he was unwilling that his bones should rest in that distant spot. It might seem nothing to him whether the Nile or the Jordan was flowing before the eyes that would close in a few hours upon all earthly objects. Here he had every thing that could comfort his decline, and do honour to his grey hairs. Joseph, the royal favourite, was his son, and all his children were about him. But his heart went back to the past, to the scenes of his first love, to the home of a thousand endearing recollections, to the north country of Judea. The text is a part of his dying injunction to those whom he left behind. "I am to be gathered unto my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah. There they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife ; there they buried Isaac, and Rebecca his wife ; and there I buried Leah."

“Bury me with my fathers.” The feeling that dictated these words enters largely into the sentiment which we call patriotism. That sentiment is mainly dependent on early remembrances and habits ; it dwells on the hallowed names and services of individuals ; it is drawn towards our fathers’ deeds and sepulchres. Thus, the love of one’s country has its foundation in some of the first principles of human nature. It is connected with many of the secret, but ineffaceable impressions of the human heart. The Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament abound with fine examples of its spirit ; and though they nowhere enjoin it, they yet contain frequent indirect testimonies in its praise. The old prophets were the patriots of their times. The great prophet himself declared that he was sent peculiarly to the house of Israel, and he wept when he thought of its coming desolation. The sacred songs of the

Hebrews are eminently national. The fragments of their history offer us here and there the most beautiful expressions of attachment to the places in which they first drew their breath. Where, indeed, has there ever been a people of any cultivation, whose gifted men have not thrown out in eloquence and song those sentiments of this kind, which were felt and responded to by the humblest of their countrymen? Where was ever a generous and susceptible mind, that did not number among its warmest affections a fondness for its native land, cherishing many tender and sacred associations with the thought of it, and interested personally in its well-being?

There have been some, however, to deny that patriotism has any thing morally estimable in it. It ought not, they say, to be encouraged ; because it is a partial and narrow principle ; because it coun-

teracts that spirit of universal benevolence which we should endeavour to excite in men's hearts. It has even been mentioned among the high recommendations of the Christian religion, and as an evidence of its divine origin, that it neither inculcates nor countenances a fictitious virtue, which is said to come of pride, to engender rivalries and hate, and to disunite by one strong passion more the different tribes of the earth. But fortunately we have here but a description of false patriotism ; the lessons of our holy faith are most at variance with this, while they recognize and sanction that which is true.

It is one of the glories of the gospel, one of the signs of its divine character, the proofs of its divine source, that it does not favour, but plainly opposes that exclusive and party feeling, which passes so freely in the world under the name of



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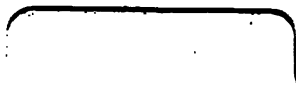
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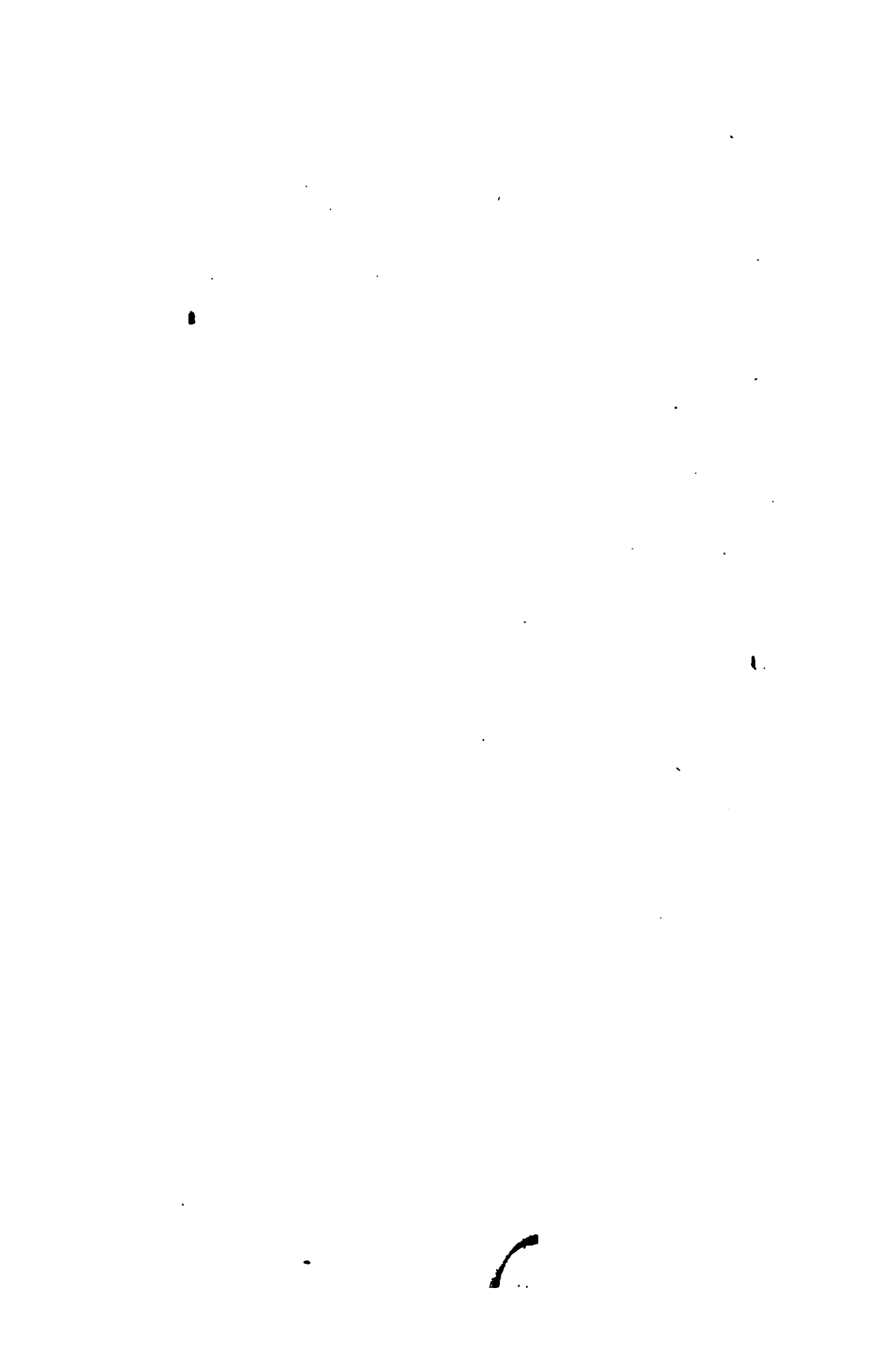




the shades of his retirement. Happy ! to have retained to the end the strong faculties of his mind, instead of exhibiting that most humiliating of spectacles, an imbecile and doting age settling down on a high spirit, as if in derision of a life of renown. Happy ! after the days of his political influence were long past, to look upon his own son at the head of the counsels of this mighty confederacy. Happy to his last breath ! to have given it up on the anniversary of his greatest work and triumph, the day of a whole nation's jubilee ;—to have given it up in such an hour, as if it had waited to be borne off on the acclamations of the people, and the festival fires of liberty.

His eulogy is in the hearts of his countrymen. I have no further tribute to pay to his memory, but that of silent admiration at his character, his actions, and his fortune.

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